



Governor's **Talk Early & Talk Often**®

Parent Education Workshop

The nationally recognized **Talk Early & Talk Often**® parent education initiative aimed at helping parents of middle school youth talk with their child about abstinence and sexuality continues to be offered to parents in the school, community, healthcare or church setting. The two hour workshop is **free of charge**. In the workshop parents will learn about ways to open the door to conversation about abstinence and sexuality; recognize and use teachable moments to communicate important facts and values; have the opportunity to practice answering difficult questions; and to listen and respond with greater confidence and skill. In the fall of 2005 the workshop was piloted in 60 communities across Michigan. **Talk Early & Talk Often**® has received high praise from parents, educators and community leaders and has continued to be implemented statewide.

If you are interested in hosting a workshop please contact Barb Flis, Coordinator at 248-538-7786 or teto@michigan.gov. For more information about the **Talk Early & Talk Often**® Parent Education Initiative go to: www.michigan.gov/miparentresources

Parents are the primary abstinence and sexuality educators of their children. Continued communication at home is vital in helping our young people avoid sexual relationships they are not yet prepared for that may have serious consequences including pregnancy, HIV and sexually transmitted infections. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, age-appropriate conversations about relationships and intimacy should begin early in a child's life and continue through adolescence. Resist "the talk" — make it an 18-year conversation.

Tips for parents:

Content courtesy of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy <http://teenpregnancy.org>

1. Be clear about your own sexual attitudes and values.
2. Talk with your children early and often about sex, and be specific.
3. Supervise and monitor your children and adolescents.
4. Know your children's friends and their families.
5. Discourage early, frequent, and steady dating.
6. Take a strong stand against your daughter dating a boy significantly older than she is. And don't allow your son to develop an intense relationship with a girl much younger than he is.
7. Help your teenagers to have options for the future that are more attractive than early pregnancy and parenthood.
8. Let your children know that you value education highly.
9. Know what your kids are watching, reading, and listening to.
10. These first nine tips for helping your children avoid teen pregnancy work best when they occur as part of strong, close relationships with your children that are built from an early age.

It's never too late to improve a relationship with a child or teenager. Don't underestimate the great need that children feel – at all ages – for close relationships with their parents and for their parents' guidance, approval, and support.